

A Newsletter for the Horticulture Division of Walt Disney World

Every Bloomin' Thing

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FROM DOYLE'S DESK

Although we have not always celebrated Arbor Day by planting a tree, our commitment to selection of beautiful trees is long standing. Upon arrival of the early settlers in Florida, they discovered very few flowering trees in our state. The Magnolia grandiflora, Cornus florida and the Gordonia lasianthus were about the only ones to be found.

Much armchair travel has been spent searching through our Horticultural library over the years for a palette of flowering trees and shrubs that just might adorn our landscape with unusual exotic color and foliage.

The testing process takes many things into consideration before actual introduction of new species into our landscape. Of course, adaptability to our soil and climate plays a prominent role in our success to introduce new plant materials. We have had more failures than successes, but those varieties that have withstood the test have enabled us to have color all seasons of the year.

This has been a spectacular year for the Tabebuia varieties at the Polynesian, the Lake Buena Vista Club and the Walt Disney World Village. In the Magic Kingdom the Pyrus kawakamii on the castle berm put on a great show. The deep red color of Erythrina humeana at Mexico in World Showcase and at Energy in Future World adds to the very colorful display at EPCOT Center.

Our landscape architects have helped to disperse the successful varieties into our landscape. May we encourage you to locate and enjoy with us these special trees that help to complement our beautiful grounds.

ARBOR DAY 1983

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE



Arbor Day is drawing near and it won't go by unnoticed at WALT DISNEY WORLD. Traditionally, Arbor Day is celebrated nationally on the last Friday in April by the planting of a tree. This year, the Horticulture Division will recognize Arbor Day, April 29, by planting a tree in a very special ceremony.

Being the "trees company" that we are, we have been named to receive a Special Tree City USA Award. The award is sponsored by The National Arbor Day Foundation and is offered to cities that display an exceptional urban forestry program and observe Arbor Day annually. In a letter to us, John Rosenow, Executive Director of the Foundation, said "Because of the unique nature of WALT DISNEY WORLD and your tremendous commitment to the planting and management of trees..." we will receive a Special Tree City USA Award.

Adding to the significance of this honor is the fact that Doyle Conner, Commissioner of the Florida Department of Agriculture, will present the award to us on Arbor Day. In keeping with tradition, the presentation will be accompanied by a tree planting ceremony.

By making people more aware of the importance of tree planting and care, Arbor Day is a one of a kind holiday. Its uniqueness was explained in this way by its founder, J. Sterling Morton, "Arbor Day ... is not like other holidays. Each of those repose on the past, while Arbor Day proposes for the Future".

Chip Drew, Supervisor
Tree Farm/Nursery

KEEPING TREES HEALTHY IS BEST CONTROL

No ips, ands, or butts about it, the Ips bark beetle is a small but destructive pest which should be taken seriously. Ips bark beetles can be found on pines of all ages throughout the state. They kill more volume of timber than any other single species of insect in Florida.

Adult Ips beetles are easily identified by their scooped-out abdomen which is surrounded by spines. They are black to reddish-brown in color and less than 1/4 inch in length.

Ips beetles attack trees weakened by natural or man-made causes such as wind damage, soil compaction, lightening, and drought. Small pitch masses and saw dust are the first signs that a tree may be infested with Ips bark beetles. Later, needles will begin to brown and drop. Eventually, the damage caused by the beetle boring into the bark and cambium will girdle the tree and cause it to die.

Healthy trees can be attacked by Ips bark beetles as well, however the high sap pressure prevents the beetles from entering the cambium layer where they do their damage. Consequently, keeping a tree healthy is the best control against the Ips beetle.

If a tree becomes infested, chemical sprays with insecticides are rarely successful because the tree is too severely weakened to recover. Heavily infested trees should be cut down and either chemically sprayed or burned to prevent spreading of the beetle. Trees surrounding the infested tree can be sprayed with an insecticide to help prevent them from becoming infested.

Gary Crossley, Supervisor
Horticultural Pest Control

IGA 83 MÜNCHEN

The Office of Horticulture at The Smithsonian Institution is sponsoring an exhibit of American Gardens at the Fourth Internationale/Gartenbau Ausstellung in Munich, Germany from April 28 to October 9, 1983. These exhibitions are only held every ten years, this years exhibition will encompass over 170 acres and has been under construction since 1978. IGA 83 will also feature gardens depicting the heritages of over thirty other countries.

As a result of a request in March by Jim Buckler, Director of Horticulture for the Smithsonian, WALT DISNEY WORLD will be a part of the exhibit on American Gardens. The exhibit will include posters, color slides and brochures. A Victorian style garden complete with plantings, garden furnishings and typical bedding designs will also be featured in the United States' exhibit at the IGA.

SECRETS FOR SUCCESS WITH GERBERAS

The Gerbera Daisy has long been prized for its large daisy like blooms held singly on sturdy 8-12" stems. Offered in a rainbow of colors and varieties, the Gerbera Daisy has been used in the florist trade, particularly in Europe, for many years. Its long stems, flowering habit, and unusually long life as a cut flower make the Gerbera a florist's dream. More recently the Gerberas have been used as a bedding plant as well. With new varieties like 'Happipot' we may soon see more Gerberas bred to bed.

If you do decide to go with Gerberas, here are my recommendations. Till your bed to a depth of 6-8" and incorporate Ortho Rose and Flower food with systemic. Plant 12-15" O.C. leaving the plants about 3/4" above final grade. Gerberas enjoy good drainage and despise soil about their crown. A most important cultural practice when bedding Gerberas is to crop off the lower leaves as they become old and rotted. The old leaves compound your leafminer problems and lessen the air exchange capacity at the soil surface. Further, Gerberas love their water, yet love their soil air too. So when you water, water well and then allow them to dry out. Last but not least, keep those spent blooms off.

Dennis Higbie, Supervisor
EPCOT Center



Upon retiring in March after 10 years of service, Guy Snell said, "You guys are great". Guy is pictured above in Liberty Square with his crew - Steve Young, Guy, Joe Clayton, Randy Orris and Gene Morgan. We think you're great too Guy!

THE UNINVITED GUEST

Termites are always a real concern, especially subterranean types. This type of termite attacks wood structures and paper products generally tunneling up from the ground. They are known to be one of the most destructive insects in the world, with property damage in the United States alone amounting to more than \$500 million per year.

Subterranean termites live in colonies in the ground and include both winged and wingless forms. They can often be seen in the early spring swarming in dense clouds.

Some steps which can be taken to prevent property damage from subterranean termites include removing all wood debris and stumps, using chemically or pressure treated wood in new construction, and inspecting wood structures on a regular basis. Our Pest Control Department inspects all wood structures yearly. If damage is discovered, chemical treatment is done to destroy the infestation. In some severe cases the damaged wood must be replaced.

In addition to subterranean termites there are several other types of wood destroying termites and beetles. Treatment of some of these require fumigation which involves tenting the structure to control the pest.

If any of these uninvited guests show up in your work location, be sure to get in touch with our Pest Control staff, they will be glad to help you identify the pest and treat it.

Thorn Lear, Supervisor
Structural Pest Control

PADDLEFISH AT THE LAND

The Land's Aquacell is home to 135 unusual looking paddlefish, Polyodon spathula. They are often called spoonbill cats, but are not members of the catfish family. In fact, they have only one living relative in their family of fossil fish and it is found in the Yantgze River in China. Our paddlefish is a native American found in the Mississippi, Ohio, and Missouri Rivers and their major tributaries.

Paddlefish are slow growing, live up to 30 years, and can reach 8 feet in length and weigh 200 lbs. They feed by swimming with their mouths agape, filtering plankton from the water using comblike devices called gillrakers located near the throat. In commercial aquaculture, paddlefish are being used as a source of cultured caviar, and their meat is also excellent food, especially when smoked.

Sandy Christopher
The Land

15 DOWN - 6 TO GO

There are a total of 21 loops of campsites at Fort Wilderness, and they are all being rehabbed this winter. Some of the rehab work has included screening sites, planting Sycamores for shade in playgrounds, naturalizing Impatiens for seasonal color and upgrading the Christmas tree display area with Hollies and Pines. Since September 1982, over 4,000 plants have been placed, 173 tons of coquina spread, and 115,000 square feet of sod laid. This winter's work also included a major rehab of Discovery Island.

Along with ornamental horticulture, the Fort Wilderness crew is being exposed to the agriculture side of horticulture. A 10 acre grazing pasture for the riding horses is in the works and will be prepared and planted with bahia.

Gwen Keefer, pictured by a rehabbed site, will be keeping us up to date with news from the Fort in the months to come.



IRUS "BLOOMS" INDOORS

It's Springtime and we have been busy decorating stages for shows and conventions during the past three months.

Our most recent project was to update and redesign the three planters inside the Crystal Palace. We planted purple Philodendron to highlight the dark green Spathiphyllum and to accent the variegated Dieffenbachias. We welcome such challenges and are looking forward to future projects.

Melanie Collier, Bob Karan, Kathy Lockyer, and Wayde Quisenberry
The Magic Kingdom Interior Crew

The first step in applying fertilizers is to ask yourself where are the roots. Our goal in most areas of the WALT DISNEY WORLD Resort Complex is to maintain green not growth! Fertilizers are hot chemicals and should be applied with care following recommendations. Soil samples have been taken to establish fertilizer needs. The needs are influenced by soil type and previous fertilizers used, but most importantly the soil pH. The availability of nutrients present in the soil is determined by pH. Therefore the pH should be corrected prior to adding fertilizers. Florida has an extended growing season with lots of rain which quickly leeches out nitrogen, so that frequent applications are best but sometimes are not possible due to time limitations. Slow release fertilizers such as sulfur-coated-urea (S.C.U.) or isobutylidene diurea (I.B.D.U.) maintain the nitrogen levels in the soil longer but are more expensive.

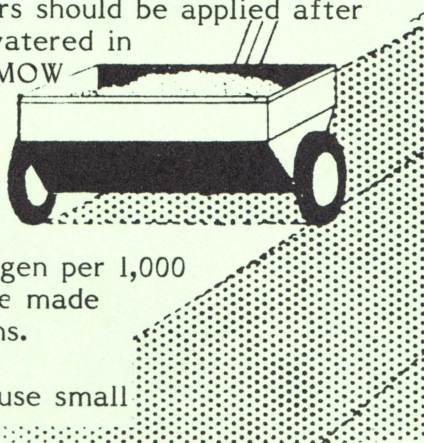
TURF

-Generally fertilizers in a ratio of 4-1-2 should be used.

-Where possible fertilizers should be applied after aerating and should be watered in immediately. **DO NOT MOW** directly after applying fertilizer.

-Generally each application should supply about one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet and should be made in two opposing directions.

-For fine textured turf, use small particle fertilizers.

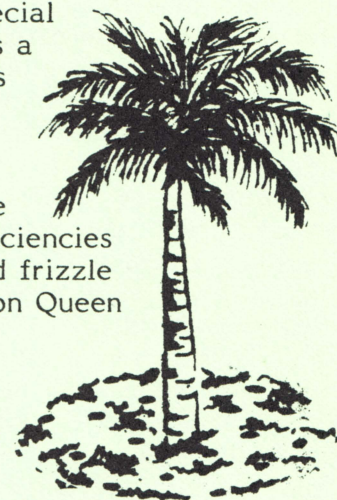


PALMS

-Generally a 12-6-8 Palm Special should be used which includes a high rate of manganese. This is an expensive mix because of the minor elements.

-Often palms have manganese and other minor element deficiencies which cause brown fronds and frizzle leaf or curly top, especially on Queen palms.

-When drilling make sure you do not go past the root zone.



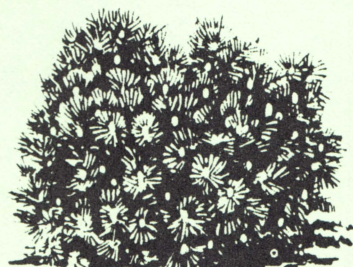
SHRUBS

-Generally fertilizers in a ratio of 3-1-2 should be used.

-Sometimes the fertilizer must be spread under the mulch to reach the roots. Be careful not to burn exposed feeder roots when doing this.

-Generally shrubs in annual beds do not need fertilizing.

-Acid loving shrubs such as Azaleas, Camelias, Junipers, Ixora, and Gardenias should receive special fertilizers with acid formulations.



TREES

-Generally fertilizers in a ratio of 3-1-2 should be used.

-Be aware that newly planted trees have smaller root zones than a well established tree. Know where the root zone is before applying fertilizer.

-Trees in lawns need drilling. Do not broadcast tree fertilizer on the turf.



STANDARD APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- Use appropriate fertilizer for plants in question.
- Know your application rate. One pound = two cups.
- Find your roots.
- Be sure foliage is dry and roots are moist.
- Avoid contact with foliage.
- Water immediately after application.

Once the decisions of grade, rate, and timing are made the success of any fertilizer program is ultimately controlled by the applicator. "It is all in your hands now."

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